

Patent claims

1-11. (canceled)

12. (new) A method for updating a service in a communication network containing a plurality of communication components which use and provide the service in the network, comprising:

providing an identical software-controlled service by the components;  
determining the service provided in the communication network by the components;  
interchanging and comparing information about a release of the software controlling the service by the components when the service provided by the components is identical; and  
initializing a software update when a the comparison identifies that the releases are different.

13. (new) The method as claimed in Claim 12, wherein software is sent from the component with a more up-to-date release to the component with an earlier release.

14. (new) The method as claimed in Claim 12, wherein software with a more up-to-date release is sent from a third communication component providing this software to the component with an earlier release.

15. (new) The method as claimed in one of Claims 12, wherein the comparison is repeated at settable time intervals.

16. (new) The method as claimed in one of Claims 12, wherein the network includes a packet-switching network.

17. (new) The method as claimed in one of Claims 12, wherein the services are selected from the group consisting of gateway functionality, voicemail server, and address server.

18. (new) A method for updating a service in a communication network, comprising:

providing the service in the communication network with a plurality of communication components, the components capable of providing an identical software-controlled service;

activating the service in a second communication component by a first communication component; and

updating software pertaining to the service on the second component when the service is not provided by software on the second component.

19. (new) The method as claimed in Claim 18, wherein the service is provided by the first component

20. (new) The method as claimed in Claim 19, wherein the software pertaining to the service is sent from the first component to the second component

21. (new) The method as claimed in Claim 18, wherein the software pertaining to the service is sent from a third communication component to the second component.

22. (new) The method as claimed in Claim 18, wherein the update is performed if the component receiving the update has hardware capable of running the software to be received.

23. (new) The method as claimed in Claim 18, wherein the updated software can be retrieved by further communication components and their services.

24. (new) The method as claimed in Claim 18, wherein at least one communication component in the communication network holds software in a respective up-to-date release ready for retrieval for a plurality of services of different types.

25. (new) A method for updating a service in a packet-switching communication network, comprising:

providing an identical software-controlled service on a first servent communication component and a second servent communication component, the components communicating peer-to-peer;

determining the service provided in the communication network by the first and second components;

interchanging and comparing release information of the software controlling the service by the first and second components when the service is identical;

comparing the release information of the first and second components; and  
if the releases are different the method further comprising:

identifying a more up-to-date component selected from the group  
consisting of the first component and the second component and a earlier component selected  
from the group consisting of the first component and the second component and

initiating a software update if the earlier component has the hardware  
capable of running the software of the more up-to-date component.

26. (new) The method as claimed in Claim 25, wherein the first and second  
servent communication components include server and client functionality.

27. (new) The method as claimed in Claim 25, wherein the software is sent from  
the more up-to-date component to the earlier component.

28. (new) The method as claimed in Claim 25, wherein the software is sent from a  
third servent communication to the component with an earlier release.

29. (new) The method as claimed in Claim 25, wherein the comparison of the  
release information is repeated at settable time intervals.